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GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN
PRESERVICE AND GRADUATE TRAINING
FOR EXTENSION WORKERS

A Report of the Fifth Annual Conference of Senate Committee
on Preservice and Graduate Training for Extension Workers

Chicago, Illinois

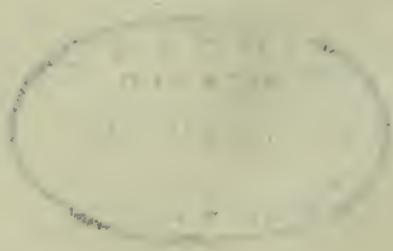
April 20-22, 1955



Committee:

Dean V. E. Kivlin, Wisconsin, Chairman
Dean Harold Howe, Kansas
Miss Ruth Noer, West Virginia
Howard Finch (substitute for Director J. E. Morrison, Colorado)
Mary L. Collings, Federal Extension Service, Secretary

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GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN PRESERVICE AND GRADUATE TRAINING
FOR EXTENSION WORKERS

(A Report of the Fifth Annual Conference of Senate Committee
on Preservice and Graduate Training for Extension Workers,
Chicago, Illinois, April 20 - 22, 1955)

In accordance with its custom of the past four years, the Senate Committee on Preservice and Graduate Training for Extension Workers again sponsored a conference of Land-Grant College resident teaching and extension representatives concerned with extension personnel training. Previous conferences have been regional in scope. This year's was a national conference drawing thirty-five participants from twenty-five States. The major purpose of the conference was to review the recommendations made by the committee since its inception in 1950, discuss various State training programs and recognize achievements in providing training opportunities.

Undergraduate Education

Extension Education Courses for Undergraduates.

During the first day, discussions related to undergraduate work (see attached program). Under the topic, "Taking Stock of our Goals and Achievements," a panel reviewed briefly the Senate Committee's recommendations over the past five years regarding undergraduate work and analyzed their suitability for continued emphasis. The recommendations include:

- (1) Each State examine its undergraduate curricula for students in agriculture and home economics and set about to strengthen them if, and whenever, such need exists. (Recommendations concerning the proportions of credit hours that should be allotted to various fields have been made by the committee.)
- (2) The college curricula should provide for a series of undergraduate courses in rural education in which a segment of the program is devoted to extension work.
- (3) The college and the State Extension Service should provide a laboratory situation in a county or counties in the State, where undergraduate students who have had rural education courses could go out into counties and get organized extension field experience. The 1954 reports from States show that 43 institutions offer one or more extension education courses; 19 of them include a field practice course. No data is available to indicate the number of institutions which have recently revised curricula.

"What should Go Into The Curricula For Students Preparing for Extension Work?"

A panel of State representatives discussed this question. In opening up the topic, Dean Kivlin reviewed briefly Wisconsin's experience in revising, in line with the above recommendations, its offerings for agricultural students interested in extension. (It now has a Department of Agricultural Education and Extension in the College of Agriculture. Its curriculum was discussed in some detail at the 1954 conference.)

Miss Noer presented a suggested curriculum for home economics students interested in extension. This will be discussed in the Division of Home Economics at the next Land-Grant College meeting. Upon approval, it can become a general pattern for institutions interested in revising curricula.

The purpose of field practice, according to Gale VandeBerg, Wisconsin, is to provide seniors the kind of experiences that give confidence. A detailed guide is given the student by the course instructor; 3 credits are earned. To evaluate the student's work a check sheet is filled out by the trainer agent. An oral evaluation is required of the student. A maximum of two students goes to any one county in a given year. Each student does work in two counties.

Miss Ethel Saxton described Nebraska's field practice course. This work covers seven weeks in the fall semester of the student's senior year, after which the student evaluates his or her experience in a report to the instructor. The district supervisor prepares the counties to participate; the agents in the trainer counties are given some remuneration for supervising the students' work. Counties are selected where the agents have time to teach and like to work with students. Nebraska is currently reviewing its offerings for extension majors. Consideration is being given to broadening courses to include some for students not expecting to major in extension.

The training given trainer agents was discussed by F. E. Rogers of Missouri. In a recent two-day conference (one of three in the past eight years) a group discussion plan was used. Trainer agents, selected on the basis of good teamwork and ability to teach, discussed two questions: (1) What are my responsibilities and job as a trainer agent? (2) How can I best carry out these responsibilities? A psychologist served as an outside consultant. Otherwise, the group drew from its own experience to decide on ways to make field experience most effective. According to Missouri's plan trainer agents serve in two different capacities: (1) They give direct supervision to field practice of women students interested in extension, and (2) they train apprentice agents, men and women, in their first county experience after employment. Home economics students may enroll in the summer for a field project for which they receive four hours credit and a \$4 a day stipend for eight weeks. This stipend is not sufficient to attract men in agriculture; consequently field practice before graduation has been discontinued for men students. Upon graduation, all suitable candidates for employment, both men and women, are put in counties on an apprentice basis with pay from State and federal

funds for a 90 day period. This group of apprentices serves as a reservoir from which future vacancies can be filled, even though graduation and vacancies may not occur simultaneously. Under the Missouri plan one trainee is in a county at a time; the same trainer agents are used as long as the county situation is favorable but new counties are added from time to time; no additional salary is provided trainer agents for this extra service.

Is An Undergraduate Major in Extension Education Desirable?

There was varied opinion regarding the desirability of undergraduate majors in extension education. John Stone, Michigan, voiced the negative opinion. Whereas separate departments of extension education, according to Mr. Stone, may have been necessary in the past due to the extreme specialization of departments, the philosophy has now changed to specialization with breadth in all departments of the college. He is of the opinion that moral obligation exists for extension to employ all students from departments of extension education, if such departments exist, regardless of the suitability of the student for extension work. Narrowing students down to one prospective employer is not desirable. He believes that a general agriculture or an agricultural administration major is to be preferred. Without a department to limit its selection, extension can pick the best from various departments. Others were of the opinion that only through establishing a major curriculum could the best type of education be provided prospective extension workers.

John Mount, Ohio, expressed the opinion that the colleges should provide an introductory extension course as a means of pointing out to students their need for courses in leadership, social organization, group techniques, etc., and then a second extension course after the student has gone into these fields to provide a chance to apply what has been learned.

Can We Predict Success in Extension?

F. E. Rogers reviewed briefly the development of the Nye Inventory, a research experiment which has given promise as a tool of selection for extension work. Copies of the Inventory and of the Missouri research bulletin describing this experiment were provided for those in attendance at the conference.

Report of the Guidebook Subcommittee.

Mrs. Helen Hoefer, New York, in reporting for the subcommittee which worked out the planning guide, described it as a method of approach for developing undergraduate training for extension. She raised four questions:

- (1) Is this kind of document worth while?
- (2) What can be done to make it more worth while?
- (3) Is it in a form that would be useful to an instructor?
- (4) Is it worth duplication in present form (with editorial corrections) or should it be subjected to drastic revisions?

Conensus seemed to be that the document is worth while. Virginia has used it recently in developing new extension courses. Nebraska and Wisconsin are using it in revising offerings. Oregon will make use of certain selections of the guide. F. E. Rogers, Missouri, cautioned that it is more valuable to have extension people take part on curriculum committees than to have them teaching extension undergraduate courses. Extension must not add courses he stated, that others on the resident staff could teach.

Relatively minor revisions and additions to the planning guide were suggested. The main one was that greater stress be put on the use of the guide in curriculum revision. The subcommittee was asked to make revisions and duplicate copies as soon as possible.

Improving Teaching.

Two topics were included on the program in the interest of improving teaching in extension courses. They were discussed by:

Malcolm Knowles, Administrative Coordinator of the Adult Education Association of the United States, in describing the research in group techniques, reviewed such research as that done by:

- (1) Thorndike who concluded that adults can learn and that the ability to learn reaches its peak at 14, begins to decline at 25, and declines 1% a year thereafter.
- (2) Lorge who followed up Thorndike's research and concluded that that adults do not lose ability to learn except through lack of use; the power to learn never declines.
- (3) Audio-visual experts who conclude (a) that audio-visual aids are only aids, they are not teaching; where used as substitutes for teaching, they fail; (b) that the more directly related audiovisual is to direct experience the better. Hence visual specialists recommend the use of live persons in their settings rather than animated cartoons.
- (4) Wilson and associates on the relative effectiveness of various extension methods.
- (5) Ohio State University staff on discussion methods.
- (6) Kirk Lewin who concluded that the group decision method is more effective than the lecture in bringing about changes in practices.
- (7) Researchers in group behavior who have developed such principles as:

- (a) Teacher should be a resource to the group rather than a transmission belt of subject matter.
- (b) Lecture is the single most effective method of transmitting a systematic body of knowledge.
- (c) A change in attitude can come about only where there is a successful experience with another attitude, not through argument.
- (d) A feeling of belonging is a necessary basis of group activity.
- (e) Goals to be worked for must be meaningful to the group.
- (f) In order to be motivated to participate, a group member must know what is expected of him.
- (g) The less one-way a process, the less dependent the group is on one individual, the more participation is developed.

Lisle L. Longsdorf and David M. Granahan of the USDA Office of Information demonstrated the use of a wide variety of visual tools. Using the theme, "Five Keys to Knowledge," they stressed that for maximum intake of knowledge, we need activate the five senses through the medium of suitable stimulants. By means of a flannelgraph they compared the percent of intake of knowledge through the ear (5%) and the eye (20%). They demonstrated use of colored cylinders to visual a report, a flexible chart, a flip-chart, an animated picture exhibit, the blackboard, and greenboard models, the use of lights to intensify the effect of a farm scene, the effect of cropping on a photo enlargement, and showed the Smoky Bear visual kit. They described how each tool was made out of easily obtained materials. They gave a preview and discussed briefly the audio-visual package which the USDA Office of Information expects to make available to the States. They described the teacher's role as that of the catalytic agent or selector of the most effective and stimulating medium. In summary, they reviewed the basic research concerned with audio-visual methods:

- (1) Research has shown that people learn differently; some learn best by one aid; some by another. Some require the direct contact but most learn best by a combination of media.
- (2) It takes many exposures to do a complete job of teaching.
- (3) A relatively few good visual aids are better than many poor ones.
- (4) Visual aids plus auditory are better than either alone.
- (5) Of the two types of charts, pictorial and conventional, the pictorial chart is more easily understood.
- (6) Of the three types of conventional charts, the bar, the circle, and the line - the bar and circle charts are more easily understood.
- (7) Not more than two comparisons should be shown on a line or bar graph.
- (8) Pictures not only make charts clearer by suggesting the subject and action, but give them more appeal.
- (9) Pictures are more effective when they are explained.
- (10) Photographs or realistic art work has twice as much attention-getting power as unillustrated material.
- (11) Action pictures are better than static pictures.
- (12) Pictures that show people expressing some observable emotion are more effective.

Mr. Longsdorf recommended: (1) That each college establish a visual library for use of its personnel and (2) that college staffs as educators evaluate the dollars spent for visual purposes and protect the visual budget.

Graduate Education

Appraising Graduate Programs for Extension Personnel.

Dean Harold Howe, Kansas, as the representative of the Graduate Council on the Senate Committee presented a list of questions which he directed towards the representatives of the nine institutions having graduate programs in extension education. Contact persons from seven of those institutions (Colorado A. & M., Cornell, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri and Wisconsin) took part on the panel.

In introducing his questions, Dean Howe pointed out that one objective of the Senate Committee is to study various facets of the graduate programs offered extension personnel. The graduate programs differ from the undergraduate in that (1) a large majority of the institutions have undergraduate work but only nine Land-Grant institutions have graduate programs; (2) there is a certain uniformity in the undergraduate offerings but the graduate programs are characterized by individuality.

The questions asked by Dean Howe were these:

- (1) Is extension education an entity distinct from adult education? If so, what are its distinguishing characteristics?
- (2) What was the purpose of setting up the program of extension education in your college or university?
- (3) Where in the organizational structure of your college or university, i.e., cooperative extension or elsewhere, is the designated agency which develops your extension education curriculum, counsels students, supervises the student's program and provides the necessary supervisory and promotional facilities for the program as a whole?
- (4) What is the role of your Graduate School in the extension education program? Do you have an interdepartmental, coordinating committee appointed by the Graduate School to serve in an advisory and promotional capacity for the graduate program in extension education?
- (5) Is there a minimum core of courses to be included in each student's program of study? If so, what are these courses?
- (6) Beyond the minimum core of courses mentioned in No. 5, what are the fields from which courses are drawn for the student's program of study?

(7) What are your requirements for admission to the program in extension education:

- (a) Academic and scholastic standards?
- (b) Course work at undergraduate level?
- (c) Professional experience?

To what extent may one of the above be substituted for another?

(8) Do you provide tangible incentives for extension personnel to do graduate work? If so, what are these incentives? Is any attempt made to provide for those who are unable to take advantage of these incentives?

(9) Granted that change is always necessary to meet new situations, what are the ways that you might suggest to improve the graduate program in extension education at your college or university?

The answers to these questions varied by institutions, naturally, but on the whole there was agreement that (1) extension education is an entity, but part of the larger field of adult education; its distinguishing characteristics are set by its clientele and its methods; (2) the purpose of setting up the program was to correct extreme specialization and emphasis on technical fields; (3) the majority of institutions have no extension education department; (4) but use a coordinating committee to serve in an advisory and promotional capacity for the graduate program in extension education; (5) there is no uniformity in a core of courses; (6) the fields from which courses are generally drawn are communications, sociology, psychology, economics; (7) requirements for admission to the program are a B average or an entrance on probation; (8) leave privileges, attitudes of supervisors, and scholarships are used as incentives.

In answer to question 9, the group suggested these improvements:

- (1) Teach principles rather than current practices.
- (2) Remove artificial prerequisites.
- (3) Look to home economics subject fields, such as family relationships, child development, as useful fields for those wanting to learn how to work with people rather than always to psychology or sociology which are rather impersonal in their approaches.
- (4) Set up guards to see that students do not take more courses in the same fields as those they have already had, rather than courses which will make them better extension workers.
- (5) With extension moving into urban areas, it is no longer necessary to limit students to rural sociology and agricultural economics. Might better take sociology and economics.

Graduate Work for Extension at a Non-Land-Grant Institution.

Dr. C. O. Houle, Professor of Education at the University of Chicago, described the extension program at his university. Dr. Houle indicated that there are three ways in which the University of Chicago is different from the usual Land-Grant College in structure and organization: (1) There is no graduate school as such but the university is itself the graduate level. The Department of Education is concerned only with graduate study. (2) The Department of Education does not take responsibility for training teachers; it is not centered around the public school enterprise. Students come from other fields than education; the school is concerned with the process of education instead of any one form of it. (3) The student completes his work in the process of passing examinations not by piling up credits in courses.

Requirement for admission is the acceptance by graduate instructors; they will accept no one without practical experience. The program is built around individual students. Dr. Houle described in some detail, in a statement he distributed, the programs of seven extension workers who studied at the University of Chicago in 1954. In discussing the seminar which is one highly successful feature of the study program, he credited two conditions as factors in success:

- (1) Each student must have had ordered systematic study in two basic courses before he enters the seminar.
- (2) Each student who takes the seminar must regularly attend over a period of a quarter.

The seminar is planned by the group of students themselves under the leadership of their elected officers. Evaluation is done through a check sheet administered by the students and by means of the planning function (planning for the future reflects the success of the past). In evaluating student performance, stress is put on ability to shape up programs, to develop objectives, to increase power of analysis, to put problems to use and the broadening of viewpoints.

What Should be Done to Provide Training for Instructors of Extension Education Courses?

In a roundtable discussion, these suggestions were made:

- (1) Arrange for a special course at one of the regional surrier schools for instructors.
- (2) Hold a two-weeks' workshop to give help on:
 - (a) Methods of visualizing and presenting different phases of extension courses.
 - (b) How to teach program planning.
 - (c) How to apply principles of group dynamics.

- (d) How to evaluate students' work.
- (e) Counseling techniques.
- (f) How to use case studies effectively in teaching.
- (g) When and how to use reference materials.
- (h) How to teach extension objectives.
- (i) Developing resource materials for trainer agents.

(3) Work out a degree study program for instructors.

(4) Develop an alternate work-study type of training program for instructors.

(5) Work out a plan by which resource materials can be developed and evaluated.

Training Committees are at Work.

The work of extension training committees varies from State to State. In some cases, one committee handles all phases of training; in others, different committees handle different phases.

These situations were described:

North Carolina - One committee; the composition varies from year to year; it works mainly on inductions and summer school programs.

Georgia - Three committees; one made up of college administrators, extension supervisors and county workers, develops undergraduate courses; a second, composed of assistant director and supervisors, deals with inservice training; and a third, made up of district supervisors and 4-H Club leaders and the leader of training, select personnel for professional improvement.

Virginia - (1) Offers 3 undergraduate courses; (2) holds a one-week new agents' conference annually for some 20-40 persons; (3) arranges a two-weeks' inservice training course at the college for some 50-60 each spring; (4) sends 20-25 persons to regional summer school each year. Committees have functioned mostly in connection with items (2) and (3) above; they are moving toward one committee.

Maryland - The dean of the college, dean of instruction, and director of extension constitute an informal committee which decides on the undergraduate program in extension education.

Oregon - Has a preservice training committee and an inservice training committee.

Ohio - Has a State County Agents' Professional Improvement Committee and a University Professors' Improvement Committee. Resident Instruction is responsible for the training of all personnel. There is a resident committee on extension education made up of agricultural extension, agricultural education, home economics education, and the dean of resident instruction. This is the basic core committee to develop undergraduate courses.

Nebraska - Mr. Lux, who heads up the training program, works through three committees: (1) Committee to work out courses included in Certification Plan; (2) Induction training committee - includes county staff members - has recently made recommendations to the director for revisions regarding this phase of training; (3) Committee on scholarships.

Minnesota - The whole curriculum is being reconsidered. Dean Dowell has mentioned setting up a subcommittee of the overall curriculum committee to work especially on the offerings in an extension undergraduate program.

Missouri - is trying to work through the professional improvement committee of the Agents' Association.

South Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin have resident staff members working with extension on training committees.

Looking Ahead to Plan for Personnel Requirements for Extension.

Such a plan must solve two problems: (1) getting new personnel; (2) getting experienced personnel to take advanced training.

Four States (Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Wyoming) have difficulty in getting well-qualified men agents; all States find it difficult to obtain enough women agents.

During 1954 approximately 12 percent of the total extension staff did advanced study, a good portion of which earned college credits. Yet replacements for State vacancies requiring advanced degrees still are difficult to find in many cases.

In discussing these problems, J. Paul Leagans, N. Y. and John Stone, Michigan, suggested:

1. Recruitment will have to start back in the counties before students come to college. (Agricultural enrollments are going down in terms of percentage of students coming into colleges.)

2. There is a declining number of students coming from farms. Extension must begin to hire some not from farms and supplement their undergraduate training with farm experience or recognize that there is a place within the service for persons developed in different fields than agriculture.
3. Extension must draw from the entire school, not limit employment to those in professional extension courses.
4. Supervisors have a responsibility to get acquainted through personal contacts with all departments on the campus to inform them of what extension is doing and what it has to offer.
5. Extension must hire students when they graduate; not alone when there is a job opening.
6. Use Nye Inventory as a recruiting tool.
7. Encourage a long-time plan for all employees throughout extension service.
8. Extension should recognize that we are going through a constantly rising standard for professional proficiency in all fields.
9. Extension must recognize and reward the person who has advanced training.
10. Identify more clearly the kinds of content which constitute a well-rounded extension education program.
11. Make graduate courses accessible. Dr. Stone described Michigan's off-campus classes which are available in seven Michigan districts, by which students earn three credits in 32 class hours.

SUMMARY

In closing the conference, Dean Kivlin, chairman of the Senate Committee, stated:

- (1) The undergraduate curriculum in home economics presented by Miss Noer is a real contribution. She will present her recommendation to the Division of Home Economics for discussion and acceptance. "I hope you will take it home and discuss it with your home economics people," Dean Kivlin said.
- (2) Field experience in extension should be a part of the preparation of extension personnel in each State. Such courses serve an important purpose.
- (3) Along with field experience comes the problem of giving those who are to direct the field experience the background of what is expected of them. We can all profit by adoption or an adaptation of the Missouri plan.

OHIO: John Mount, Junior Dean, College of Agriculture
Edwin L. Kirby, District Supervisor, Extension Service.

OKLAHOMA: E. D. Hunter, Assistant Director of Extension.

OREGON: C. W. Smith, Assistant Director of Extension

SOUTH CAROLINA: J. W. Jones, Director of Agricultural Teaching
Thos. W. Morgan, Assistant Director of Extension

SOUTH DAKOTA: J. S. Webster, Assistant Professor, Agronomy

VIRGINIA: Dr. James A. Duncan, Associate Professor, Extension Service

WEST VIRGINIA: C. C. Anderson, Administrative Assistant, Extension Service
Miss Ruth Noer, Head, Division of Home Economics.

WISCONSIN: V. E. Kivlin, Associate Dean of Agriculture
Gale VandeBerg, Extension Training

WYOMING: W. T. Kirk, Assistant Director of Extension

USDA OFFICE OF INFORMATION: Lisle L. Longsdorf, Assistant Director, Visual Information
David M. Granahan, Exhibit Specialist, Information

FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE: Mary L. Collings, Chief, Personnel Training Branch
K. F. Warner, Extension Educationist

CONFERENCE ON PRESERVICE AND GRADUATE TRAINING
FOR EXTENSION WORKERS
LaSalle Hotel, Chicago
April 20 - 22, 1955

PROGRAM

Wednesday, April 20

Presiding, Dean V. E. Kivlin, Chairman, Senate Committee

9:30 a.m. - Introductions

- Taking Stock of Our Goals and Achievements
in Training Programs - A Panel Discussion
Ruth Noer, W.Va.; Gale VandeBerg, Wis.
Ethel Saxton, Nebr.; F. E. Rogers, Mo.
and M. L. Collings, Fed. Ext. Ser.

- Recess

- Improving our Teaching in Undergraduate Extension
Education Courses - A Report of the Subcommittee
Mrs. Helen P. Hoefer, N. Y.

- Lunch

2:00 p.m. - What Research Tells Us About Group Techniques
Which Improve Teaching

Dr. Malcolm Knowles, Adm. Coordinator,
Adult Education Association

- Recess

- What We Are Doing to Provide Training for
Trainer Agents
-F. E. Rogers, Mo.

Thursday, April 21

Presiding, Ruth Noer

- 9:00 a.m. - Visual Aids as a Means of Improving Teaching
Lisle Longsdorf,
USDA Office of Information
- Recess
- Appraising the Present Graduate Programs in Extension Education - Dean Harold Howe, Kansas
- Lunch

- 1:30 p.m. - The University of Chicago Graduate Training Program for Extension Workers - Dr. C. O. Houle, Department of Education, University of Chicago.
- Recess
- What Should be Done to Provide Training for Instructors of Extension Education Courses?
Roundtable Discussion

Friday, April 22

Presiding, Dean Harold Howe, Kansas

- 9:00 a.m. - Looking Ahead to Plan for Personnel Requirements for Extension
 - J. Paul Leagans, N. Y.
 - John Stone, Mich.
- Recess
- State Experience with Training Committees
 - State Representatives who Have Committees
- Summary and Next Steps - Dean Kivlin
- Noon - Adjourn